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CTW, CLC

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February 28, 2012

Connecticut General Assembly  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
Room 3800, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Re: SB 181, "The Good Jobs Bill"

Representative Zalaski, Senator Prague, and Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Pedro Pella, and I work as a janitor at the UConn Storrs campus. I'm employed by GCA Services, a building cleaning company contracted by the State of Connecticut.

I have worked at UConn for 11 years. I am lucky that I work for a company that pays decent wages with a union contract. That is why I came here today to request that we pass Senate Bill 181 to ensure that we create decent jobs in this state.

I will tell you my story. I arrived from Peru looking for a better life many years ago. Before having a union contract, I used to make about seven dollars an hour, working five hours a day and without health insurance, paid vacation, or sick days. I used to have to work two or three jobs and still struggled to make ends meet.

When we got the union contract, things improved dramatically. We began to have wage increases, health insurance that allowed us to visit the doctor when needed, without having to worry that we couldn't pay for it.

With the union I began to enjoy the benefits that have allowed us to make a decent living. Now I am earning 15.50 per hour, and I can help support my mother who lives in Peru. She is old and needs expensive medication.

But today, there are still too many workers who are working for a pittance. How can a person support a family on eight or nine dollars an hour?

These people need to be treated with respect and dignity. We need to start putting in a system where working people are not disrespected and exploited. Here in Connecticut we have the opportunity to help by passing Senate Bill 181 to ensure that no irresponsible companies uses tax dollars to create poverty-level jobs.

Thank you for your time today. And thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

**Pedro Pella**  
Member, Local 32BJ, SEIU

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